



The Daily Whip

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2005

House Meets At...	Last Vote Predicted At...
12:00 p.m.: Legislative Business	5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

FLOOR SCHEDULE AND BILL SUMMARY

Quorum Call. There will be a recorded Quorum Call vote at 12:00 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Election of the Speaker of the House. The Chairman of the Republican Conference will nominate J. Dennis Hastert and the Chairman of the Democratic Caucus will nominate Nancy Pelosi to be the Speaker of the House for the 109th Congress. This election is by manual roll call vote, with **each Member called individually alphabetically by the Clerk.** After the Speaker is elected, the Oath of Office will be administered to Members and Delegates.

House Rules Package for the 109th Congress (Privileged Resolution).

- **The Republican House Rules Package for the 109th Congress weakens the current House ethics rules.** Contrary to reports that the Republicans have retreated on their egregious plan to gut the ethics process, the proposed Republican Rules will seriously weaken the Ethics Committee's ability to enforce standards of integrity by providing that no action will be taken on a properly filed ethics violation complaint after 45 days unless the committee votes by majority vote to take action. Under current rules, a properly filed complaint that has not been addressed by the Chair and Ranking Member automatically goes to an investigative subcommittee (Rule XI). The Republican proposal would make it extremely difficult to investigate properly filed complaints. As a 5-5 committee, the Ethics Committee is prone to deadlocks. Under this new rule, by appointing compliant, partisan Members to the Committee, either side will be able to guarantee a deadlock when a legitimate, factually strong ethics complaint against a Member is filed.

Additional highlights of the suggested Republican changes include:

- **Establishing a procedure in the Case of Mass Incapacitation** that would allow the House to lower the quorum required to do business in the case of a calamitous event that temporarily incapacitates a large number of Members;
- **Allowing the House to consider bills under Suspension of the Rules on Wednesdays;**
- **Allowing a relative to accompany a Member or staff person on privately funded, but officially connected trips** – current rules allow only a spouse or child;
- **Establishing a standing Committee on Homeland Security** with legislative and oversight authority over: (1) Overall homeland security policy; (2) the internal administration of the Department of Homeland Security; and (3) functions of the Department of Homeland Security, including: Border and port security (excluding immigration policy and non-border enforcement); Customs (excluding customs revenue); Integration, analysis, and dissemination of homeland security information; Domestic preparedness for and collective response to terrorism; Research and development; and Transportation security (including the TSA);
- **Allowing Committee Chairmen a privileged motion to recess for up to 24 hours** subject to the call of the chair (only the motion to adjourn from day to day is privileged)



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under current rules). Gives committees the power to give their chairmen the ability to offer a privileged motion to go to conference, without the prior authorization of the committee;

- **A Budget "Deeming" Resolution.** Because no budget resolution was approved during the 108th Congress, the House deemed passage of its budget resolution to move forward with last year's appropriations process. The Republican Rules package revives that deeming resolution in the 109th Congress until such time as a new budget resolution may be approved.

All Democrats are urged to oppose the Republican Rules package which guts the House ethics rules.

Resolution regarding Tsunamis. Expressing condolences and support for assistance to the victims of the earthquake and tsunamis that occurred on December 26, 2004, in South and Southeast Asia.

Privileged resolution regarding death of Congressman Matsui. A privileged resolution expressing profound sorrow on the death of the Honorable Robert T. Matsui.

TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK

The GOP Leadership has announced the following schedule: On Wednesday, and the balance of the week no votes are expected in the House (on Thursday, the House will convene in joint session to count electoral ballots).

In addition, on Wednesday, a memorial service will be held for Congressman Matsui in the United States Capitol Building, Statuary Hall, beginning at 12:30 p.m.

Daily Quote...

"'When in danger of losing, simply rewrite the rules in the middle of the game to make it impossible for the other side to win.' That's what seems to be happening in Washington, D.C. House Republicans, led by Speaker Dennis Hastert, are pushing a plan to require the House ethics panel, which has an even balance between Republicans and Democrats, to produce a majority vote before it can undertake an ethics investigation. At present, a tie vote would keep a complaint pending. Such a change would have stopped the panel from investigating allegations of campaign finance law violations and issuing several reprimands against [House Majority Leader Tom] DeLay earlier this year."

-The Houston Chronicle in an editorial on Monday